



For Immediate Release:

Soaring Musical **VIOLET** Arrives at Live Arts in Time for the Holidays



October 13, 2022

Contact: Katie Rogers, Marketing Manager | katie@livearts.org

Charlottesville, Virginia - Live Arts Theater's 2022/23 Transformations Season journeys forward with the award-winning musical **VIOLET**. This soaring musical pilgrimage features music by Jeanine Tesori and lyrics and book by Brian Crawley. It is based on "The Ugliest Pilgrim" by Doris Betts. **VIOLET** will have 12 performances in the Gibson Theater, November 18 through December 10, 2022, at Live Arts Theater, 123 E.



Water Street, in Charlottesville. VIOLET is presented by [Latitude 38](#) and sponsored by [Woodard Properties](#).

Tickets are \$33 for adults or \$30 for students and senior citizens. Free tickets can be reserved for a preview performance on Thursday, November 17, and there will be Pay-What-You-Can performances on November 19, November 30, and December 7.

Tickets are available through the Box Office at boxoffice@livearts.org, by phone at 434-977-4177 x123, or online at livearts.org/tix.

Live Arts will host two special events for VIOLET: An opening night champagne reception following the performance on November 18, 2022, and an audience talkback following the performance on Thursday, December 8, 2022 (7:30pm curtain).

Audiences are welcome to enjoy the bar and concessions one hour prior to the show and during intermission.

About the Show

“Heart-stirring ... with its tangy flavors of country, gospel, blues and honky-tonk rock” – New York Times

From the composer of *Fun Home* and *Caroline, or Change*, VIOLET is a captivating story set in 1964 about a young woman from a North Carolina hilltop town in the Blue Ridge Mountains. As a child, Violet was struck by an ax blade which flew off accidentally when her father was chopping wood. She decides to embark on a 900-mile Greyhound bus journey to Tulsa—hoping a televangelist preacher will pray away the deep scar on her face and transform her life. On her way she meets a young African-American soldier and his paratrooper buddy, and their stories collide.



Based on the short story "The Ugliest Pilgrim" from Doris Betts' 1973 collection *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, Violet's journey is something like a trip to Oz—full of yearning, hope, and the quest for dignity, featuring a show-stopping, toe-tapping gospel, rock, country, and R&B score. VIOLET is a 1997 Drama Critics' Circle Award Winner and 2014 Tony Nominee for Best Revival of a Musical.

"VIOLET reveals a place where miracles occur—the world as we'd like to see it, where we all are seen for who we are." – Los Angeles Times

The Live Arts production of VIOLET is directed and choreographed by Perry Medlin with musical direction by Katherine Nies, Graeme Rosner, and Laura Collier. It showcases local performers Mary Catherine Hughes as Violet, Thad Lane as Flick, Daniel Hugus as Monty, Bernadette Moran as Young Vi, and Bruce Young as Father, with Chris Estey, Hillel Finder, Davina Jackson, Jeannie Jones, Bonita Patton, and James Scales (ensemble). The Live Arts production also features a dynamic local creative team: Mandy Shuker (production stage manager); Dan Feigert (scenic designer); Laurence Hugo (lighting designer); Bruce Young (costume designer); Daniel Angell (sound engineer); Maggie Rogers (properties designer); and Daphne Latham (wigs/makeup designer).

Performance History

Begun in 1994 by Tesori and Crawley at the famed Lehman Engel/BMI Musical Theater Workshop, VIOLET continued development at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center in Connecticut before premiering Off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons in 1997. In July 2013, the musical returned to New York as a one-night, limited engagement production mounted by the *Encores! Off-Center* program, featuring Sutton Foster in the title role.



That critically acclaimed production led to a 2014 Broadway run in a revised version by Roundabout Theatre Company, with Foster reprising her role. VIOLET continues to be performed regionally around the country, including at Chicago's Mercury Theatre, Ford's Theatre of Washington, D.C., and Seattle's A Contemporary Theater.

About the Composer

Jeanine Tesori has written music for Broadway, opera, film, and television. She is one of the first female composers commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera, and ASCAP cites her as the first female composer to have two new musicals running concurrently on Broadway. Her musicals include *Fun Home* (Tony Award for best original score, Pulitzer finalist); *Soft Power* (Pulitzer finalist); *Caroline, or Change* (Olivier Award for Best New Musical; lyrics, Tony Kushner); *Violet* (four Tony nominations including Best Musical Revival); *Shrek* (lyrics, David Lindsay-Abaire); *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; and *Twelfth Night*. Her operas include *Blue*; *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck*; *The Lion, The Unicorn and Me*; and the upcoming *Grounded*. Tesori's music for plays includes *Mother Courage*, John Guare's *A Free Man of Color*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Tesori is the founding artistic director of New York City Center's *Encores! Off Center* series, a lecturer at Yale University, and the supervising vocal producer for Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story*. Most recently, she composed the music for the new musical *Kimberly Akimbo*, with book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire, which opened on Broadway October 12, 2022.

About the Book-Writer/Lyricist

Brian Crawley is an award-winning American playwright and screenwriter. His work includes the book and lyrics for *A Little Princess* (composer Andrew Lipppa); *Violet* (composer Jeanine Tesori); *Evangeline* (Ted Dykstra); and *Down There* (composer Lewis Flinn). In the documentary *One Night Stand*, Crawley writes a short musical in 24 hours with composer Gabriel Kahane. His awards include the Kleban Award, the Richard Rodgers Musical Production Award, an AT&T OnStage Award, Lucille Lortel



Award for Outstanding Musical, and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical (all for *Violet*). His plays have been developed or staged at Lincoln Center, New York Theater Workshop, the National Alliance of Musical Theatre, and the Eugene O'Neill summer theater conference.

About the Director/Choreographer

Perry Medlin's choreography and directing work with Live Arts includes THE LEGEND OF GEORGIA MCBRIDE, FOLLIES, PIPPIN, 13, and GYPSY, as well as many summers working with the summer teen theater programs. Other local credits include *Young Frankenstein* and *The Laramie Project* with Four County Players. Perry holds a BFA in musical theater from Elon University, and they currently teach theater and public speaking at Tandem Friends School, where they have directed productions of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *Little Women*, *26 Pebbles*, and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged*, among others.

About Live Arts

Live Arts is a volunteer-powered, nonprofit community theater in Downtown Charlottesville. Founded in 1990, Live Arts is celebrating 32 years of forging theater and community. The 2022/23 Transformations Season is made possible by season sponsors Elizabeth and Joe LeVaca, media sponsors [C-VILLE Weekly](#) and [WTJU 91.1FM](#), pay-what-you-can sponsor [Ting](#), education sponsor [The Local](#), and IT partner [PJ Networks Computer Services](#). Shows are sponsored by [Allison Partners](#), The Caplin Foundation, [Chaski Global](#), Pamela Friedman and Ronald Bailey, Barbara and Jay Kessler, [Latitude 38](#), [The Madwoman Project](#) at CACF, [Panorama Consulting](#), [Silverchair](#), [Strauss Construction](#), [Woodard Properties](#), George Worthington and Cameron Mowat, and philanthropic gifts by hundreds of theater lovers in our community.



Live Arts is supported by grants from Albemarle County, City of Charlottesville, the BamaWorks Fund of Dave Matthews Band at the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, the DN Batten Foundation, Bank of America Foundation, and Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

For more information

Please contact Marketing Manager Katie Rogers by email at katie@livearts.org or phone at 434-977-4177 x103, or visit livearts.org.

Calendar information for VIOLET at Live Arts is included on the following page.



CALENDAR INFORMATION on VIOLET

WHO: LIVE ARTS presents

WHAT: The award-winning musical VIOLET

SPONSORS: Presented by Latitude 38, sponsored by Woodard Properties

CAST: Chris Estey, Hillel Finder, Mary Catherine Hughes, Daniel Hugus, Davina Jackson, Jeannie Jones, Thad Lane, Bernadette Moran, Bonita Patton, James Scales, and Bruce Young

DATES/SHOWTIMES: Friday, November 18 through Saturday, December 10, 2022 (excluding Thanksgiving week)

- Wednesday/Thursday @ 7:30pm
- Friday/Saturday @ 8pm
- Sunday @ 2pm

WHERE: Live Arts Theater, 123 East Water Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- Opening Night Reception: Friday, November 18, 2022
- Post-Show Audience Talkback: Thursday, December 8, 2022

TICKETS: \$33 for adults, \$30 for students and senior citizens.

- Pay-What-You-Can tickets available for first Saturday and all Wednesday night performances.
- Free tickets to the preview night performance can be reserved through livearts.org/tix.

BOX OFFICE: 434-977-4177 x123 or online at livearts.org/tix

INFO: katie@livearts.org or visit livearts.org.

SAFETY: Live Arts prioritizes the health and safety of our volunteers, patrons, and staff. Please visit livearts.org/covid for our current COVID policies before attending the show.